

Strangulation and Choking

What is non-fatal strangulation?

Non-fatal strangulation (sometimes called non-fatal neck compression or choking) happens when pressure is applied to the neck. This can occur during consensual sexual activity or sexual assault.

Even when there are no marks, bruises or visible injuries, compression to the neck can still cause **serious internal injuries**.

Important things to know

- Pressure to the neck can be dangerous
- You may look or feel okay immediately after, but symptoms can develop hours or even days later
- **There is no safe way to remove the risks associated with neck compression**
- Loss of consciousness during neck compression is a medical emergency
- Serious injury can occur without any visible signs – if something feels wrong, seek medical attention

When to seek medical attention

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call 000 or attend the nearest Emergency Department

- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness, even briefly
- Dizziness or fainting
- Problems speaking or changes in your voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- Vision changes
- Severe headaches
- Weakness, numbness or tingling
- Confusion, difficulty concentrating or memory problems
- Seizures

After neck compression, it may help to have someone stay with you for the next 24 to 72 hours if possible. Where it is safe to do so, take photos of your injuries and keep a record of any symptoms. Seek medical advice even if you feel okay initially.

If this happened in the context of family violence or sexual assault

You may wish to seek support and contact one or more of the services below:

For emergency assistance, call 000

Safe Steps on <https://safesteps.org.au/> or 1800 015 188

The Orange Door on <https://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> or call:

Bentleigh – 1800 319 353

Dandenong – 1800 271 170

Frankston – 1800 319 353

During business hours, call SECASA Intake on 8769 2200 – opt 1

After hours, weekends and public holidays, call the *Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL)* on 1800 577 011

Call 1800 RESPECT or 1800 737 732